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FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

LS 6966

BILL NUMBER: SB 471

NOTE PREPARED: Jan 5, 2015

BILL AMENDED:

SUBJECT: Straight Ticket Voting Pilot Program.

FIRST AUTHOR: Sen. Schneider

FIRST SPONSOR:

BILL STATUS: As Introduced

FUNDS AFFECTED: X GENERAL
DEDICATED
FEDERAL

IMPACT: State & Local

Summary of Legislation: *Straight-Ticket Voting-* The bill establishes a straight-ticket voting pilot program for the 2016 and 2018 general elections. The bill requires the Secretary of State (SOS) to designate three counties as straight-ticket voting pilot counties based on county population.

Designated Counties- The bill requires a county designated as a straight-ticket voting pilot county to remove from the ballot the option for a voter to vote for all candidates of a political party or an independent ticket at one time or with one mark, except for candidates for presidential electors.

Application & Revocation- The bill also authorizes the SOS to adopt a process to allow counties to apply to be designated a straight-ticket voting pilot county. It permits the SOS to revoke a county's designation as a straight-ticket voting pilot county under certain circumstances.

Effective Date: July 1, 2015.

Explanation of State Expenditures: *Straight-Ticket Voting-* Depending on the selection method, it is likely the Secretary of State's office would be able to designate three counties within existing resources. The SOS could utilize the resources of the state Election Division (IED) to assist in the selection, if needed.

Application & Revocation- It is likely a selection and revocation method would be devised within existing resources.

Explanation of State Revenues:

Explanation of Local Expenditures: *Designated Counties-* In order to comply with the straight-ticket removal, ballot cards for optical-scan systems would have the instructions for voting a straight-party ballot, the straight-party indication ovals, and the devices (major party insignia) beside the straight-party ovals removed from the ballot. In theory, there may be some ballot printing savings from having a shorter ballot. In conjunction with the ballot changes, programming vendors would need to remove the straight-party vote feature when programming the coding cards for the optical-scan readers in future elections. Any additional cost to remove the straight-party vote feature would depend on the contracted agreement between the selected counties and the vendor.

Removal of the straight-party feature would minimally impact a selected county with modern DRE touchscreen voting systems. Newer DRE systems, such as the GBS Accuvote TSX, have the capability to shut off the straight-party voting option. Currently, DRE voting systems must have either a push button (on older DREs) or an icon on a touchscreen system for voting a straight ticket.

Explanation of Local Revenues:

State Agencies Affected: Secretary of State.

Local Agencies Affected: Counties selected for the proposed pilot program.

Information Sources: <http://www.in.gov/sos/elections/2404.htm>; Hancock County, Jennings County, LaGrange County, and Tippecanoe County clerks; Marion County Election Board.

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